

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

March 12, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 2, 2004, **BRUCE JOHNSON**, age 41, of Carbondale, Illinois, was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury sitting in Benton, Illinois, in a one-count indictment, charging him with conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, § 841 and 846. The violation took place between August 2002, and June 2003, in Carbondale, Illinois. An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The conspiracy offense carries a penalty of not more than 20 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$1,000,000, and a term of 3 years supervised release. JOHNSON is being held without bond pending a May 10, 2004, jury trial.

The investigation is being conducted by the Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group and Drug Enforcement Administration pursuant to their participation in the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, Jackson County States Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Murphysboro Police Department, and Southern Illinois Enforcement Group.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.